

LIVE CHRISTMAS TREES: GIFTS THAT KEEP ON GIVING

Though your Christmas tree may have more needles on the floor than on the branches, it still can add life to your shrubs and plants. Christmas tree compost and mulch is very popular among resident gardeners and landscapers.

- ✓ The mulch, being slightly acidic, is beneficial to acid-loving plants such as evergreens and rhododendrons.
- ✓ Adding compost to home gardens improves soil quality, stores moisture and reduces weeds.
- ✓ In some instances, it can also be used for erosion control.
- ✓ Make your own mulch by chopping and shredding up your tree. The mulch will be “green” and will need to stay in a compost pile for several months to dry out.
- ✓ Chop or grind smaller branches for wood chips to use in flower and shrub beds.
- ✓ Roughly one in every three households purchases a fresh cut Christmas tree, resulting in a large amount of tree waste to be managed after the holiday season.
- ✓ Between 16-20 trees, when chipped, will produce a cubic yard of chips/mulch initially until it decomposes. Or roughly one tree equals one trash bag of chips.
- ✓ Each year, Public Works crews remove more than 500 trees per day from Metro Christmas tree recycling sites.
- ✓ In 2006, the approximately 18,000 trees recycled through Metro totaled nearly 300 tons of recyclable material.
- ✓ In Davidson County, the second week of January is when most of the Christmas trees are recycled at Metro sites.

If you’d rather not mulch, you can still place your tree outdoors or in a brush pile where branches can become a winter habitat for birds and other small wildlife.

Before disposing of a live-cut Christmas tree, remember to:

- **Remove all trimmings** such as tinsel, ornaments, lights and garlands.
- **Seek permission** before discarding trees on public or private land. Discarding trees without permission could result in a litter violation.